

# **Hartford Headache Center**

144 Main Street, East Hartford, CT 06118

Testimony of: Dr. Tanya R. Bilchik, MD

In opposition to: Senate Bill 270

## **Public Health Committee**

Chairman Harris, Chairman Ritter, members of the committee, my name is Dr. Tanya Bilchik and I'm here today to testify on Senate Bill 270, An Act Concerning the Establishment of a Regional Policy on the Prohibition of Certain Gifts from Pharmaceutical and Medical Device Manufacturing Companies to Health Care Providers

As a bit of background for you, I'm a Board Certified Neurologist with a Subspecialty Certification in Headache Medicine awarded by the United Council for Neurological Subspecialties. Along with founding the Hartford Headache Center in East Hartford, I am also a Clinical Assistant Professor of Neurology at the University of Connecticut School of Medicine.

Throughout my career, I have taken an active role in headache research, and have been an investigator in numerous pharmaceutical studies involving the causes and treatment of migraines and of headache disorders.

My concern with this legislation stems from my experience and involvement in these research studies. Clinical trials have produced invaluable data, which has lead to some of the most effective treatment options for ailments across multiple medical disciplines. Currently there are more than 3,000 clinical trials being conducted in Connecticut. I'm worried that if this legislation were to pass, it would negatively impact the progress of clinical trials and impede opportunities for Connecticut physicians to conduct small initial studies and pre-clinical research.

At our center and as physicians we are consistently evaluating the best course of treatments, therapies and combinations thereof to treat our patients. Never assuming that one person's pain is the same as another, we keep searching for the right remedies and their sources. Without the ability to have regular interactions with pharmaceutical representatives our academic and clinical knowledge and analyses of new products and devices are severely diminished.

Migraine medications are costly at around \$15.00 to \$20.00 a tablet. Not all work for everyone. The ability to give a patient a sample of medication to try is cost-saving in the long run as it prevents paying for a full prescription of 9 to 12 tablets before the medication is tried first.

I ask that you please rethink this legislation that may result in unintended and unnecessary consequences for our patients.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today.